



MLRT Matters

MAIN LINE REFORM TEMPLE

February 2021

Be Inspired. Be Connected. Belong.



Celebrate
Purim with MLRT!

Purim Talent Show
Thursday, February 25 at 7:30 pm

Shalach Manot Orders
Due Thursday, February 11

There is a lot to celebrate within the pages of this issue of MLRTMatters, from holidays, Shabbat, B'nai Mitzvah Services, innovative programming, and MORE! We are excited to share it with you but please keep in mind that we are constantly evaluating, adjusting, and adapting our programming to the rapidly changing times in order to keep you safe and healthy!

We ask for your understanding during this time and urge you to visit our website at mlrt.org or call the Temple office at 610-649-7800 for the most up-to-date information on all our services and programs.

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Above all, Hope

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Rabbi David Straus

I want to share this prayer sent to me by one of our fellow congregants. It is attributed to Pope Francis, though in actuality was written by the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935) and was entitled "Palco de vida" (Stages of life). Only the concluding "Life is an incredible show" was changed from the less-exciting "Life is a no-miss obstacle" in Pessoa's poem. I found it very meaningful during these often difficult and stress filled times.

"You can have flaws, be anxious, and even be angry, but do not forget that your life is the greatest enterprise in the world. Only you can stop it from going bust. Many appreciate you, admire you and love you. Remember that to be happy is not to have a sky without a storm, a road without accidents, work without fatigue, relationships without disappointments. To be happy is to find strength in forgiveness, hope in battles, security in the stage of fear, love in discord. It is not only to enjoy the smile, but also to reflect on the sadness. It is not only to celebrate the successes, but to learn lessons from the failures. It is not only to feel happy with the applause, but to be happy in anonymity. Being happy is not a fatality of destiny, but an achievement for those who can travel within themselves. To be happy is to stop feeling like a victim and become your destiny's author. It is to cross deserts, yet to be able to find an oasis in the depths of our soul. It is to thank God for every morning, for the miracle of life. Being happy is not being afraid of your own feelings. It's to be able to talk about you. It is having the courage to hear a "no". It is confidence in the face of criticism, even when unjustified. It is to kiss your children, pamper your parents, to live poetic moments with friends, even when they hurt us. To be happy is to let live the creature that lives in each of us, free, joyful and simple. It is to have maturity to be able to say: "I made mistakes". It is to have the courage to say "I am sorry". It is to have the sensitivity to say, "I need you". It is to have the ability to say "I love you". May your life become a garden of opportunities for happiness ... That in spring may it be a lover of joy. In winter a lover of wisdom. And when you make a mistake, start all over again. For only then will you be in love with life. You will find that to be happy is not to have a perfect life. But use the tears to irrigate tolerance. Use your losses to train patience. Use your mistakes to sculptor serenity. Use pain to plaster pleasure. Use obstacles to open windows of intelligence. Never give up Never give up on people who love you. Never give up on happiness, for life is an incredible show."

Israel Matters

Modern Israel is an agricultural miracle compared with other arid cultures, especially in the Middle East. Israel has led the world in the development of technologies that dramatically reduce the need for fresh water for agriculture and that allow the transformation of salt water (plentiful in Israel) to fresh water (naturally scarce in Israel).

Fresh Water from Seawater. In the Middle East, fresh water is often described as "liquid gold". Over the past 15 years, Israel has rapidly deployed a succession of desalinization technologies, and has quickly gone from a country running out of fresh water to supply its needs to a country where over 75% of its fresh water needs (for drinking and for agriculture) is supplied through desalinization plants, both onshore and offshore. As the number of these plants has grown, great strides have been made in reducing the methane footprint from the plants themselves, so that these technologies will be sustainable long term.

Drip Irrigation Technologies. In addition, amazing new Israeli technologies now permit the use of far less water to achieve the same agricultural yield. These technologies have allowed the transformation of great expanses of arid desert to thriving agricultural oases. Recently an even more amazing Israeli technology has been introduced that will sharply reduce the fresh water requirements for production of rice and other grains. Rice cultivation uses 40% of the world's freshwater and causes 10% of the world's methane emissions. The new rice drip irrigation technologies reduce water consumption by 70% and reduce methane emissions to near zero. If only 10% of the world's rice growers switch to these new technologies, it is the equivalent of taking 40 million cars off the road!

We hope you will enjoy these "good news" bulletins from Israel. Please email Sherrill at sherrill.neff@gmail.com or Jackie at jzshul@gmail.com if you have any questions, or want to contribute to future issues.

Celebrate with MLRT this Month!

February is Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance & Inclusion Month.

While we celebrate all of our community members each day of each month, February and JDAIM is a time to remind ourselves of the need to widen the proverbial net, to make sure that no one stands on the periphery of the community, and to refresh ourselves and our efforts to be a community of belonging for all people. This JDAIM we encourage you to read a book by an author with a disability, watch a movie with actors with disabilities, get involved with our inclusion team, and visit inclusioninnovations.com/jdaim.

Join us on Friday, February 19 for a Shabbat service honoring Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month. Joining us will be guest speaker Jodi Newmark, Director of Encompass at JUF Chicago. The music and readings throughout the service will represent inclusivity and accessibility. Members of the MLRT Inclusion Team will join us to help lead the service. We look forward to seeing you as we celebrate diversity and inclusion in the Jewish community at this service. For more information, contact Cantor Rudnick at frudnick@mlrt.org.

Jodi Newmark is the Director of Encompass at the Jewish United Fund in Chicago. Coordinating efforts among its four partner agencies, JCFS Chicago, Keshet, Libenu and Yachad, Encompass engages in fundraising, community planning, advocacy and inclusion to expand Jewish community-based services for adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Among other efforts, Encompass led a community-wide Synagogue Inclusion Project and more recently a Young Adult Inclusion Project to facilitate the participation of adults with disabilities in naturally occurring programs and activities throughout Chicago's Jewish community.

HAPPY PURIM

With celebrations including costumes, skits and songs, noisemakers, and gifts of food, Purim is definitely full of fun! The main communal celebration involves a public reading—usually in the synagogue—of the Book of Esther (Megillat Esther), which tells the story of the holiday: Under the rule of King Ahashverosh, Haman, the king's adviser, plots to exterminate all of the Jews of Persia. His plan is foiled by Queen Esther and her cousin Mordechai, who ultimately save the Jews of Persia from destruction. The significance of Purim lies not so much in how it began, but in what it has become: a thankful and joyous affirmation of Jewish survival.

Join us for a festive Purim celebration on Thursday, February 25 at 7:30 pm as we bring in the holiday with merriment. Hear the Megillah, sing some songs, then share in the talents of our community with an MLRT Talent Show with improv interludes, hosted by our very own Nicole Cohen, improv extraordinaire.

To participate in the talent show, contact Cantor Rudnick at frudnick@mlrt.org.

Nicole Faust Cohen graduated from Northwestern University with a B.S. in Biomedical Engineering and a Theme in Theatre/Fine Arts. In addition to dramas, musicals and locally televised sketch comedy, she has performed in an improvisational comedy troupe in Chicago and around the region. She is currently a Managing Director at a global consulting and technology company, where she has worked in the Life Sciences industry for the past twenty years.

From her corporate experiences, Nicole has recognized that the journey leading to business outcome greatness is as important as the greatness itself. To achieve those meaningful journeys, Nicole believes optimal and positive communication, collaboration and innovation are required. It is with those goals in mind that she created "Improv@Work" – content to bring her theatre and improv background to the masses in order to improve how people interact and bring out the best in each other every day.

For information about Sisterhood's annual Shalach Manot fundraiser, please see page 7.

We Need Your Support!



Joel Ginsparg
President

The global COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on MLRT. When the pandemic forced us to close the synagogue building, we did not stop functioning as a synagogue community. We quickly transitioned to offer an amazing variety of virtual educational programs, religious services, and life cycle events to keep our Jewish community alive and connected. Our Early Childhood Education (ECE), Religious School, Tribe, Confirmation, Adult Education, Shabbat services, MLRT Connects! programs, and even B'nai Mitzvah continue, although in new and different ways. Our clergy and staff created extraordinary and moving Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services. As always, the clergy are providing comfort to those in times of mourning or hardship.

Unfortunately, as a result of the pandemic, MLRT is now a smaller community. Our membership has declined in the past year from 867 members to 713 members. Our revenues from membership contributions decreased from last year by \$430,000. Our Early Childhood Education (ECE) program is an important part of our life-long education program and brings families into our community. In a regular year, we enroll at our capacity of 150 students which enables us to operate the program to generate a small financial surplus. This year, due to capacity limitations caused by social distancing guidelines, our enrollment is much lower. We enrolled 72 pre-school and Kindergarten students in the fall trimester and 75 students in the winter trimester. Due to the reduced enrollment as well as the increased costs to meet COVID-19 safety precautions, we are projecting a deficit in the ECE program of \$26,000. Unfortunately, as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions in place last summer, we were unable to open our ECE Summer Camp, which resulted in an additional decrease of \$150,000 in revenues.

Our Religious School and Tribe programs are also invaluable parts of our life-long education programs. They are innovative and progressive, hands-on programs designed to develop positive Jewish identities and build core Jewish competencies for our students and families. Our enrollment this year in the Religious School and Tribe programs is 261 students, a 30% decrease from 369 students last year. Many families chose not to enroll their children during the pandemic. We are hopeful that when the pandemic is over, families will re-enroll their children, especially as we continue to refine our program to meet evolving needs. While the Religious School and Tribe programs typically operate at a small deficit, the lower enrollment this year as well as the increased costs to meet COVID-19 safety precautions has resulted in an increase to the Religious School and Tribe deficit to about \$76,000.

Recognizing that this fiscal year would be challenging, this past summer we took proactive actions to reduce expenses including reducing the compensation and benefits packages of our clergy and staff. However, even after these proactive expense reductions, we have been projecting a deficit of over \$600,000 as a result of the decrease in membership contributions and other revenues, the deficits in the Early Childhood Education, Religious School, and Tribe programs, and additional COVID-19 related costs. We do not have sufficient cash reserves to cover this large of a deficit. Therefore, during the past few months, we have taken actions to cut additional expenses. We reduced the budgets for some programs and have made a reduction in staff. We are still evaluating the reduction or elimination of other programs and expenses. However, without making additional immediate major cuts in staff, the impact of which would be catastrophic to the short term and long term success and viability of MLRT, we cannot eliminate the deficit this year through cuts in expenses.

Asking for money is never easy. The truth is, we have nowhere else to turn to support MLRT but to you, our members. Together, we have faced difficult challenges in the past. You responded generously and we emerged even stronger. For your contributions, your ongoing membership, and your support, I want to thank you. However, we can only eliminate this deficit if all of us contribute more to support our synagogue community. At this time, perhaps more than ever before, we need your support!

We have launched a campaign to eliminate the deficit. We are hoping that everyone will contribute to our COVID-19 Emergency Fund, in whatever capacity you are able. The link to make contributions is mlrt.org/covid19. In addition, if you have any questions about our finances and operations or have any suggestions, please email me at president@mlrt.org and I will personally respond to you.

Please help us by contributing to our COVID-19 Emergency Fund. Your support will ensure that MLRT will continue to be the creative, dynamic, innovative and caring community that is so important to all of us.

On behalf of our leadership, clergy and staff, thank you for your continued support!



Main Line Reform Temple
COVID-19 EMERGENCY FUND

**Thank You for supporting our mission
and our staff so that we can
continue to serve you!** (as of January 13)

Rabbi's Circle
Colonel Ken & Leslie Brier

Tree of Life
Anonymous Sandy & Frank Norman Judy & Marvin Rounick & Family

First Responders
Mignon & Jim Groch Sam & Debbie Schwartz

Circle of Friends

Howard I. Grossman	Alicia Felton & Sherrill Neff	The Sonnenfeld Family
Gwen & David Keiser & Family	The Rockford/Gish Family	Toba & Mitchell Spector
Rachel & Rich Lester	Sherrie R. Savett	The Treiman Family
Karen & Tom Nathan	MLRT Sisterhood	

Contributors

Nancy Lovitch-Bleeden & Ed Bleeden	Cynthia & Jordan Katz
Randi Becker	The Kopelman Family
Cristy & Mitchell Hollin	Ami & Jess Lonner
Mary & Trey Kamplain & Family	Hallie Lightdale & Avram Mack

MLRT Supporters

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Jackie & Josh Bobrin	Joel & Lynda Ginsparg	Cantor Faryn & Jack Rudnick
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Jill & Ed Caine	R. Victor & Nancy Haas	Robin & Eric Siegel
Wilma Caine	Bobbie Halpern	Amy & Bob Silverman
Helene & Marc Cohen	Janet & Steven Handleman	Lori Robbins & Brian Slipakoff
Anna & Michael Dietz	Kerry & Dave Heppen & Family	Delores & Marvin Steinberg
Celeste Durnwald & Hugh Ehrenberg	Esta & Jim Kamplain	The Stoller Family
Lori & Bill Ehrich	Barbara Miller	Marcy & Tom Wiener
	Jamie & Neil Mushlin	

**Please join our list of Donors to ensure MLRT can continue our mission of supporting the community.
Visit mlrt.org/covid19 to donate now!**

Lifelong Learning



Sally Brown,
Librarian

We've seen how the past year has deepened our understanding of the impact that literature, and more broadly arts and culture, has on our MLRT community. Reading brings us together, keeps us entertained and intellectually stimulated, and pushes us to grow. Whether it is through our engaging short story discussions, our visiting authors, or the Bernie Kleinman Book Club, we have found comfort in our virtual programs and look forward to the benefits of a world where we can gather in person once again.

Our short story for Thursday, February 11, at noon is written by Julie Orringer, author of the acclaimed novel, The Invisible Bridge. Last year we read her "Stations of the Cross", a remarkable story. This time we will read "When She is Old and I Am Famous", a beautiful story of two young women, one an artist and the other a model, and how their relationship changes over time, from the collection How to Breathe Underwater.

I wrote in the January bulletin about the Sisterhood program that will take place on Tuesday, February 23, 2021, at eleven o'clock in the morning. Our guest author will be Susie Orman Schnall who will enlighten us about her book, We Came Here to Shine. Once again, as in her previous book Subway Girls, she will give us well-researched historical detail. The novel takes place during the 1939 World's Fair in Flushing Meadows, NY. The New York World's Fair of 1939 holds an important place in history as it took place as the Great Depression was winding down and World War II was beginning. Sisterhood members and all congregants are invited to attend!

In addition, I suggest the short story by actor and author, Tom Hanks, from his collection, Uncommon Type. The story is "The Past is Important to Us", recounting one man's time travel to the 1939 World's Fair. The twist-ending story has wonderful descriptions of the fairgrounds and exhibits and is perfect for those planning to attend the program on February 23 or for anyone who enjoys science fiction and history.

Lastly, I am looking forward to an Ella C. Wolf discussion of The Last Kings of Shanghai: The Rival Jewish Dynasties that Helped Create Modern China, the choice of the Bernie Kleinman Book Club. Two Jewish families, the Sassoons and the Kadoories, had extraordinary foresight in business matters and are renowned for their generosity and success. You probably have heard of Jews rescued during the Holocaust and welcomed in Shanghai due to the extraordinary efforts of a member of the Sassoon family. We will host the author Jonathan Kaufman, Director of the School of Journalism at Northeastern University in Boston and Pulitzer Prize winning reporter who has been writing about China and reporting from there for thirty years, on Friday evening February 26, at 6:30 pm when our virtual services begin.

Let us enhance the winter months with programs that enrich our understanding of new topics of Jewish interest. Further details available at mlrt.org.



Attention: Main Line Cooks!

Join Bonnie and David for an appetizer and wine Zoom get together on Wednesday, February 10 at 7:00 pm. Prepare your favorite appetizer or hors d'oeuvre, pour a glass of wine and show your food (by Zoom) and schmooze with other foodies. If you send your recipes to Bonnie or David, they will share them with all participants after the event.

Please let Bonnie or David know if you are able to attend at boncakes@gmail.com or drderawdin@aol.com.



HASSEL ADULT EDUCATION LECTURE - SHARON GELLER: KNOCK, KNOCK... JEWS THERE?

Sunday, February 21 at 10:00 am

Join us on Zoom as comedic actress, Sharon Geller, gives us a program on Jewish humor. Is there anyone who doesn't need some comedy in his or her life right now?

Sharon Geller, a Philadelphia native and graduate of Temple University, has appeared on Saturday Night Live and has been in the national touring company of the off-Broadway hit, *Old Jews Telling Jokes*. Let's try to find something to laugh about at this time.

All programs are virtual and can be found at mlrt.org/zoom

Lifelong Learning

Our Racial Justice Subcommittee's next conversation, *Creating A Common Vocabulary: Race, Caste and Class* will meet on Wednesday, February 10 at 7:30 pm.

We will read excerpts from Isabelle Wilkerson's book *Caste*, which was also excerpted this summer in the Magazine Section of the Sunday New York Times. You will be able to find the reading on our website at mlrt.org/nohate.

DU SIACH - JOIN THE CONVERSATION on February 11 at noon!

If you would like to join this emerging partnership with a Reform congregation in Israel located in Ma'alot Tivon, please be in touch with Rabbi Straus at 610-649-7800 or dstraus@mlrt.org. All that is "required" is a commitment to regularly participate, as it is difficult to develop connections without regularly being on the call, and a desire to learn together, talk about current events, and work to develop relationships and friendships with one another.

Sisterhood



Ami Lonner & Elizabeth Stoller,
Sisterhood Co-Presidents

2021 has brought many of us some hope! And with that, we look forward to spreading some happiness with our biggest fundraiser of this year, sending Shalach Manot to fellow congregants. But you may ask, why do we do this? One interpretation is that the mitzvah of *mishloach manot* (which literally means, "sending portions to one another" and is commonly known as shalach manot) is, "counteracting the accusations of Haman. Haman accused the Jews of being "a scattered, and divided nation." Thus, the Jewish people send gifts to each other in order to show that they are not divided, but rather are united. Make sure to check your email for detailed instructions on how to participate in our Shalach Manot fundraiser and Purim mitzvah!

At Main Line Reform Temple, the Sisterhood has developed this fundraiser as a way to give back to the Temple community by funding special projects. In past years, we have been able to help install lights to highlight the beautiful stained glass in the sanctuary; we bought new computers and equipment for our clergy and senior staff; we helped sponsor Artist in Residence weekends; we bought more china and flatware for the Temple; and we built a gaga pit for the Religious School and ECE. Most recently, we made a sizable donation to the COVID-19 Emergency Fund at MLRT to help keep the Temple running during this difficult time. We are proud of our Sisterhood community and we are grateful for all the hard work and hours that our members put in to make this yearly event such a success!!

Besides ordering your shalach manot for your friends and neighbors, (which might be considered an extra special mitzvah this year), we also invite you to our next Sisterhood author brunch. It will take place virtually on February 23 at 11:00 am with Susie Orman Schnall. She will be discussing her novel, *We Came Here to Shine*. Please join us via Zoom through the link on our webpage.

Our general meetings are open to all; the next meeting is February 9 at 10:00 am. Join us!

SHALACH MANOT PACKAGES!

It's always been a Purim mitzvah to send gifts to family and friends, but this year, showing people we are thinking about them and maintaining those connections are even more important.

To honor our Purim traditions and strengthen our MLRT community, Sisterhood is selling and delivering beautiful Shalach Manot packages for \$7/recipient. Special bundled pricing is available to send to MLRT clergy and staff, and additional packages for family or friends who are not members of our MLRT community will be available for \$10. And to be sure we spread as much Purim cheer as possible, we are including anyone who was a member of MLRT last year.

You should have received an email with your personal link for ordering. Online ordering is easy at happypurim.com. If you cannot find the email or did not receive it, please contact Lisa Greenblatt at greenblatt5@comcast.net.

All orders are due by midnight on February 11, no extensions.

The funds raised from Sisterhood's Shalach Manot project are donated directly to MLRT for special projects or needs. Opportunities to volunteer with us for packing and contactless delivery are also available; sign up when you order on happypurim.com or contact greenblatt5@comcast.net or jackiebobrin@gmail.com.

Happy Purim and thank you for your support!

Brotherhood

The anchor is up, the sails rigged, the ship of state is plying smoother waters now calmed by sense and sensibility as our nation continues to head into 2021. To assess why this may be, over 500 Brotherhood members were treated to a webinar featuring Rabbi David Saperstein. Described by some as America's most influential rabbi, beginning in 2014 Saperstein served as United States Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, having been so appointed by then President Barack Obama. He previously served as the director and chief legal counsel at the Union of Reform Judaism's Religious Action Center (RAC) for more than 30 years.

Rabbi Saperstein summarized the current "voyage out" by unfurling a set of statistics related to the recent presidential election. Polls by J Street and Brandeis University, but not those which, again, erred stunningly in their prognostications, identified trends and conclusions, among which: Jewish women voted higher for Biden (68%), but Evangelical Christians women for Trump (84%); racial justice is considered a greater concern than that of concern for Israel; the Orthodox community voted overwhelmingly for Trump; the record number of votes cast placed a glaring spotlight on the deep division in the country; that the sustained attack on the electoral system is anathema to that system, although the election was carried out smoothly; while women voted heavily in favor of Biden, Biden failed to win blue-collar voters in the crucial swing states. Rabbi Saperstein's greatest fear now centers on the fact that, if we are unable to make really hard decisions that matter to all of us, we will confront a bleak future. The issues that matter to Trump voters should also matter to Biden supporters: the consequences of globalization; rural America's sense of always being neglected; our children not being able to fulfill their dreams; the fear of demographic shift: in 2008 54% of Americans identified as white Christians, in 2019 that percentage dropped to 44%. Any smooth sailing for Biden's administration will meet with stiff headwinds given the abandonment of the tenets of the Warren/Berger Supreme Courts; the seismic shift in the Court may influence future decisions on climate change, women's rights, and the like.

So, what has been described here is no less than a rehearsing of what we know and what we don't. We know, and Rabbi Saperstein urges us to know, that our Jewish communities must advocate for the values and principles which we consider essential for our very existence. What we do not know is what Reform Judaism will look like in 10 or 20 years. What we know is that we can, just as Brotherhood has, donate money now to local food pantries or to the Mitzvah circle to provide coats for children and adults. We know that members of our community can volunteer to be part of a meal giveaway, such as the one Brotherhood took part in in 2020, that provided food for 350 people and prompted the organizer, Reverend Cavaness of Bethel AME of Ardmore, to declare her thanks for "sharing in this act of kindness." Our actions do speak louder than mere words; our advocacy transformed into action will ensure that we, as a Brotherhood and as a Temple community, will remain relevant. Recall also that even your kayak will get you to your destination as long as you know your direction.

Kindly,
Gary Brock, Vice President

We welcome anyone interested in reading to join The Bernie Kleinman Book Club on select Tuesday evenings throughout the year for friendship, discussion and review. Those attending will have the opportunity to pick a book and be the discussion leader. We will meet on March 16 for our next discussion!

If you are interested in joining, please contact Norman Fienman at nfienman@gmail.com.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

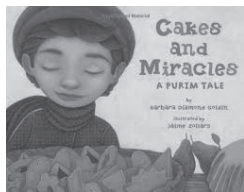
Sunday, March 14 | 11:00 am

In accordance with the MLRT Bylaws, please join us for MLRT's Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, March 14 at 11:00 am. Our President, Joel H. Ginsparg, our Senior Rabbi, Rabbi David Straus, and other leaders, clergy, and staff will provide an overview of MLRT's services and programs during the pandemic and plans for the post-pandemic future.

There will be some exciting announcements! The Nominating Committee Chairs, Amy Kopelman and David Rawdin, will also present the slate of Officers and Trustees nominated to serve in the coming year. Additional information including the Zoom link will be sent out in the next month.

Teach Our Children: Early Childhood Education

The ECE is learning all about Purim! Crowns are being bejeweled, hamantaschen are being eaten, and groggers are filling out our hallways with their exceptional sound! We are reading about Purim, dressing up as the royal court, and learning with pride about our Jewish heritage! We wanted to share some of our favorite books, recipes, and more for the Purim holiday, enjoy!



Book Review – Rabbi Newburge “Cakes & Miracles” by Barbara Diamond Goldin

There are a plethora of wonderful Jewish books to share with your child. In case you have not yet signed up for PJ Library, it's not too late and you can do so at pjlibrary.org. One of my all-time favorite books is about Purim (the other is for Passover); it is called Cakes and Miracles written by Barbara Diamond Goldin. It is about a blind boy named Hershel, who wants to help his mother prepare hamantaschen to sell at the market for the holiday to earn a little extra money for the family. Although his mother is concerned about his help, Herschel is inspired and with growing

confidence trusts in his dream of making the cookies, creating beautiful hamantaschen that impress the whole village. It is an incredible book about making one's dreams come true despite adversity.

Best wishes for a Purim Sameach- A Happy Purim!



Hamantaschen Recipe – Sonia DeCurtis

As I recall, when I was a classroom teacher, this was a most wonderfully fun holiday for the children. And why not? This is a story about a true super heroine, Esther. She saved her people from the evil Haman. After hearing the story of Purim, the children used their creative skills to make crowns, masks and groggers so that they could dress up. What a delight to see everyone taking part in the retelling of the Purim story. Another favorite activity related to this holiday was baking the traditional hamantaschen cookies. The children rolled dough and cut it into circles. A variety of

fruits, chocolate chips or peanut butter were used to fill the circles which then were pinched with three corners... just like Haman's hat. I hope, as you celebrate Purim this year, you make your own version of this tasty treat.

Think outside the box... how about some Pizza Hamantaschen?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1: Unthaw frozen pizza dough and cut into small circles | 3: Pinch into three corners |
| 2: Layer tomato sauce and shredded cheese in the middle of the circle | 4: Bake per dough instructions |
| | 5: Enjoy!! |



DIY Grogger – Keshia Cortez

One of the ECEs favorite Purim art projects is a fun grogger project. They come in different shapes and sizes and range from the simplistic to the truly artistic. Please see one of our favorite grogger projects below. This activity is a chance for your child to express their individuality, artistic spirit, and participate in Purim traditions We hope you share pictures of your creations with us!

What you need:

Stapler
Paper Plate

Handful of beans or rice
Paints, crayons, markers (your choice!)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1: Decorate the outside or bottom side of your paper plate | 3: Place your handful of beans or rice inside and staple the |
| 2: Fold the plate in half and staple the plate, rim side, halfway closed | rest of the plate closed |
| | 4: Shake it!!!! |

MLRT Purim Shpiel by Cantor Rudnick

"It's hard to imagine a world where Jews are not involved in theater, or even a time when Jews condemned theater, but at one time in our history, Jews found theater, particularly Roman theater, which was violent and often ended with death, to be vulgar, pagan, and hedonistic. Of course this caused a dilemma as Purim is celebrated with farce and merriment, known today as the Purim Shpiel. The shpiel is a play to teach the Book of Esther, the story of Purim, and found its roots in the mid-1500s. The parodies we have come to know and love today evolved in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe during the Enlightenment. It is not unusual to celebrate Purim with our ECE and see our teachers dressed up and acting out the story, to hear the music, and to celebrate with MLRT as we act out the story of Purim to Frozen, The Beatles, the 80's, Hamilton, and parodies of many other popular movies and musicals. Please join us this year on Thursday, February 25 for our first even MLRT Purim Talent Show and Shpiel."

Teach Our Children: Religious School



Rabbi Kevin Kleinman

The Hebrew calendar connects us both to the seasons of the year and the special Jewish holidays that fall within a particular month. The late winter and early spring have three special and important Jewish holidays. The first is Tu B'Shevat – the birthday of the trees. This year in Religious School, we continued our learning from last year about Jewish environmental ethics and are biblical responsibility to be *Shomrei Adamah*, stewards of the earth.

The festive holiday of Purim falls in the Hebrew month of Adar, which we begin in mid-February. We will, of course, be adapting our celebrations of Purim this year due to the ongoing pandemic. But fear not! We will tell the tale of Queen Vashti and her cousin Mordechai. We will dress up in costumes. We will eat hamentashen. Just as Queen Esther used her creativity to save the Jewish people, we will use our creativity to save Purim at MLRT! Look for more information on page 3.

The final spring Jewish holiday is Passover. As we begin to plan our Seders at home, our Religious School students will be busy learning the Four Questions and helping their parents with creating meaningful rituals to add to their Seders this year.

February 5 – Family Shabbat Service – 6:30 pm
No Religious School: February 11 and February 14

MLRT's MLK Jr Day of Service

Our Martin Luther King Day of Service was a bit unusual this year since all of the activities were completed at home. However, our wonderful MLRT community still rallied and showed their commitment to Tikkun Olam!

- ♥ More than 120 delicious and nutritious salads were made for our Lower Merion area food pantries
- ♥ More than 50 toiletry bags were assembled for the patients of the Lankenau Maternity Clinic
- ♥ We received boxes and boxes of period supplies for the Mitzvah Circle Foundation
- ♥ We received bags upon bags of clothing for Cradles 2 Crayons
- ♥ ECE families made tons of beautiful decorations for residents of Saunders House

Even amidst a pandemic, we were still able to celebrate a bit of (safe) community spirit at the end of the day when members of the TON stood at the Temple doors to receive the items from participants who drove up to deliver their goods.

Thank you to the volunteers and project leaders who gave up their time to adapt their plans to a virtual era and instruct our members on the best way to support their various projects.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our at-home projects and collections. Your support helped us give some much-needed support to all of the local organizations listed above and proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that nothing can stop the giving spirit of MLRT!

In Memoriam

We extend condolences to members of our community on the loss of their loved ones

Ashley J. Altman

Father of Jennie Nemroff
Grandfather of Andrew, Daniel, and
Stephen Nemroff

Alex Barry

Nephew of Linda Finkelstein

Herman Gerwitz

Husband of Stacey Gerwitz

Bebe Markman

Mother of Howard Markman

Stanley Superfine

Husband of Ann Superfine

Contributions

(As of January 13)

Annual Fund

Wendy & Andy Abrams

In memory of Ashley J. Altman

Mary & Louis Bernstein

In memory of Ashley J. Altman

The Conston Family

In appreciation of MLRT

Jason Forman

In honor of Rick Altman

Betsy & Perry Hamilton

In honor of MLRT

Alicia Felton & Sherrill Neff

In honor of MLRT

Emily & Matthew Perl

In memory of Elaine Gold

Carrie Hartman & Joel Shapiro

In memory of those that lost their lives from COVID-19

Marcy & Tom Wiener

In memory of Elaine Gold

Brotherhood Fund

Hedy & Steven Dash

In memory of Herman Gerwitz

Mary & Trey Kamplain

In memory of Herman Gerwitz

Wendy Oldstein & Mark Komen

In memory of Bebe Markman

Cantor Portnoy Music Fund

Jeanne Levy

Yahrzeit of Leonard Levy

Linda Mundy & Jeffrey Drebin

In appreciation of Cantor Marshall Portnoy

Cantor Rudnick Discretionary Fund

Linda & Larry Kates

In honor of the birth of Emma Leigh Kriegsmann

Linda Mundy & Jeffrey Drebin

In appreciation of Cantor Faryn Rudnick

Lori Robbins & Brian Slipakoff

In appreciation of Cantor Faryn Rudnick

Covid-19 Emergency Fund

Nancy & Larry Bailine

In memory of John Dugan & Mimi Bailine

Esther & Burton Balkin

In honor of the 90th Birthday of Stanton Dubin

Helene & Marc Cohen

In memory of Herman Gerwitz

Celeste Durnwald & Hugh Ehrenberg

In honor of Sophia & Charlotte Ehrenberg

Esta & Jim Kamplain

In honor of Mary, Trey, Sophie, Livia & Ellis Kamplain

Barbara Miller

In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen

Jennifer & Russell Onish

In honor of the MLRT ECE

Cantor Faryn & Jack Rudnick

Yahrzeit of Else Blumenfeld

Covid-19 Emergency Fund cont.

Debbie & Sam Schwartz

In honor of Matthew, Haley & Allison Schwartz

Food Bank Fund

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In memory of Herman Gerwitz

Ann & Gordon Gelfond

In memory of Herman Gerwitz

Carol Halbert

In memory of Herman Gerwitz

Kristin Scott

In memory of Herman Gerwitz

Tranon Apt. Friends & Neighbors

In memory of Herman Gerwitz

L'dor Va'dor Fund

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In memory of Bebe Markman

In memory of Stanley Superfine

Susan Kleinman

Yahrzeit of Bessie Hendel

Angela Sorrentinol

In memory of Elaine Gold

Diane & Rabbi Richard Steinbrink

In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen

In memory of Harvey Fingerhood

Mona Zeehandelaar & Ken Harris

In memory of Ashley J. Altman

In memory of Herman Gerwitz

Odell Diamond Library Fund

Jane Brown

Yahrzeit of Steven G. Brown

Mitzvah Fund

Susan & Larry Picker

In honor of the Bar Mitzvah of Gabe Deringer

In memory of Lindsay Lane

Rabbi Newburge Discretionary Fund

The Bershad, Fertel & Nemroff Families

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Linda & Robert Broder

In memory of Stanley Superfine

Ben Lewis

In honor of Rabbi Geri Newburge

Aaron Muderick

In memory of Michael Muderick

Rabbi Newburge Discretionary Fund cont.

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Rabbi Straus Discretionary Fund

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Yahrzeit of Jeffrey Adelman

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In memory of Bebe Markman

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In memory of Herman Gerwitz

Sandra Bomze

Yahrzeit of Paul E. Bomze

Jane S. Brown

In memory of Herman Gerwitz

Linda Mundy & Jeffrey Drebin

In appreciation of Rabbi David Straus

Marjie & Steve Feinstein

Yahrzeit of Herbert Schlanger

Stella & Gordon Fink

In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen

Bobbie Halpern

In support of the Food Bank Drive

Debbie Klein & Family

Yahrzeit of Mayme Gallner

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Weinberg Multimedia Library Fund

Shirley Demskey

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World Jewry Fund

Annette & Alan Simons

In memory of Shirley Koss

Youth Engagement Fund

Amy & Terry Buckman

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Amy & Bob Silverman

In memory of Norman Sassler

If you have any questions about your donation listing, please contact Davida Chornock,
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Did you know that you can make donations, pay your dues, register for school, and update your membership information online?

Honor the memory of your loved ones and celebrate your simchas by submitting your MLRT contributions online at mlrt.org/giving.

Log on to the ShulCloud portal via the "Member Portal" button on our website to update your membership information, pay your dues, add yahrzeits, and so much more! If you have any questions, contact Gil Marder at gmarder@mlrt.org.

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You Belong Here.

MLRT strives to uphold the value of welcoming all people into our spiritual home that is so near and dear to our heart as a Jewish people. And we truly do welcome all people, regardless of age, gender, ability, race, sexual orientation, and political leanings.

Be Inspired. Be Connected. Belong.

Believing in those words means we want everyone who joins or visits MLRT to feel at ease and comfortable participating in all aspects of temple life: spiritual, ritual, social, educational, and musical. Our Inclusion Committee's mission is to proactively combat and remove barriers to participation and engagement of all kinds so that our collective mission of a warm and thoughtful community is widely realized and maintained from generation to generation.



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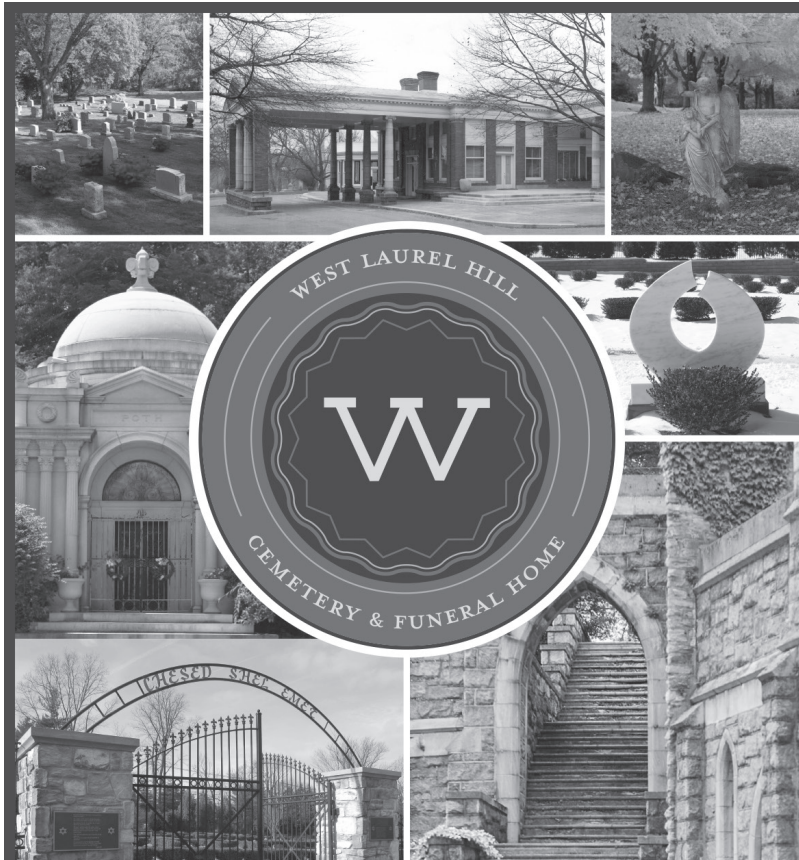
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We are constantly adding new programs. Check our website often for the most up-to-date information



KEEPING IT REEL - MONDAYS, FEBRUARY 1, 8, 15, AND 22 AT 8:00 PM

Get your popcorn ready for Keeping it Reel, a weekly movie discussion with Rabbi Geri Newburge! All movies can be found on Netflix and we will be joined on 2/22 by Brian Kates, editor of The Butler, and Cantor Rudnick's cousin!

1: Ma Rainey's Black Bottom

8: Menashe

15: Suffragette

22: Lee Daniels' The Butler



SHORT STORY DISCUSSION - THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11 AT 12:00 PM

Enjoy a riveting discussion of "When She Is Old and I am Famous" from Julie Orringer's [How To Breathe Underwater](#).



FORWARD THINKING - TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16 AT 12:15 PM

Join Rabbi Straus for a thought-provoking lunchtime discussion of selected articles from The Jewish Daily Forward.



MUSIC CLASS - THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18 AT 7:00 PM

Part two of an in-depth presentation on the Mendelssohns, focusing on the life and music of Felix Mendelssohn.



JDAIM SHABBAT WITH JODI NEWMARK - FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19 AT 6:30 PM

Honor Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month with our special guest!



HASSEL ADULT EDUCATION LECTURE - SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21 AT 10:00 AM

Spend the morning laughing with comedic actress and Philly native, Sharon Geller!



LUNCH & LEARN - TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23 AT 12:00 PM

Take a break for lunch while Rabbi Straus serves up interesting conversation during our monthly joint Lunch & Learn.



PURIM TALENT SHOW - THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25 AT 7:30 PM

Hear the Megillah, sing some songs, then share in the talents of our community with an MLRT Talent Show!



NOSH & DRASH - FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26 AT 12:00 PM

Start your Shabbat with some learning with Rabbi Newburge. Explore ancient and modern texts for new perspectives in Jewish life and thought.



ELLA C. WOLF SHABBAT WITH JONATHAN KAUFMAN - FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26 AT 6:30 PM

Learn about the two rival Jewish dynasties that helped create modern China with this Pulitzer-Prize winning author!

WEEKLY OFFERINGS

THURSDAYS

11:00 am - Bible Study

Our rabbis lead an ongoing discussion of the Tanakh over the year. Join anytime, whether you are an avid Torah student or have never looked at the Torah before.

FRIDAYS

6: 30 pm - Friday Shabbat Service

We invite you to join us as we say Shabbat Shalom to one another, light candles together and make Kiddush. At the end of services, we will un-mute all for our Oneg Shabbat, when we can talk to one another again.

SATURDAYS

9:00 am - Torah Study

Each week our Rabbis lead us in lively discussion as we read from the Parsha, or weekly portion, and learn about its context and history. All are welcome to join us, from wherever you are.

10:00 am - Shabbat Morning Service

Immediately following Torah Study, join us for a lovely Shabbat Service featuring our clergy.

6: 30 pm - Havdallah with the Rudnicks

Join Cantor Rudnick and her family for songs & Havdallah, as we look with hope towards a new week of peace and of good health.

As we continue to utilize technologies, such as Zoom, to gather as a community, we are constantly reviewing protocols to ensure the safest virtual community possible. When you sign into a meeting, class, or services, your name must be present in the waiting room; we cannot admit anyone whose device name appears solely as iPad or iPhone.

Before you enter a Zoom, please make sure your device is listed correctly. You can do this on your iPhone or iPad by doing the following:

Go to Settings —> General —> About
Tap the first line, which is the name of your device
Rename your device so it reads your FIRST AND LAST name, and then tap done.

It is OK if your device reads (your name) iPhone/iPad, as long as your name is present. We thank you for your help. We want you to be a part of anything and everything that we offer at MLRT. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact any member of the senior staff. We look forward to seeing you on Zoom!

Shabbat & Holiday Services

Friday, February 5

6:30 pm Zoom Shabbat Service

Saturday, February 6

9:00 am Shabbat Morning Walk

9:00 am Zoom Torah Study

10:00 am Saturday Morning Zoom Service

5:00 pm Bar Mitzvah of Victoria Kathryn Benjamin
Daughter of Debra & Steven Benjamin

6:30 pm Zoom Havdallah with the Rudnicks

Friday, February 12

6:30 pm Zoom Shabbat Service

Saturday, February 13

9:00 am Zoom Torah Study

10:00 am Saturday Morning Zoom Service

6:30 pm Zoom Havdallah with the Rudnicks

Friday, February 19

6:30 pm Zoom JDAIM Shabbat Service with
Jodi Newmark

Saturday, February 20

9:00 am Zoom Torah Study

10:00 am Saturday Morning Zoom Service

5:00 pm Bar Mitzvah of Owen Soiferman
Son of Shelly & Erik Soiferman

6:30 pm Zoom Havdallah with the Rudnicks

Friday, February 26

Purim

6:30 pm Zoom Shabbat Service with Author
Jonathan Kaufman

Saturday, February 27

9:00 am Zoom Torah Study

10:00 am Saturday Morning Zoom Service

5:00 pm Bat Mitzvah of Janie Drew Silverman
Daughter of Laurie & Doug Silverman

6:30 pm Zoom Havdallah with the Rudnicks

Friday, March 5

6:30 pm Zoom Shabbat Service

Saturday, March 6

9:00 am Zoom Torah Study

10:00 am Saturday Morning Zoom Service

5:00 pm Bat Mitzvah of Tessa Gunn
Daughter of Amanda & Andrew Gunn

6:30 pm Zoom Havdallah with the Rudnicks

**All programs, classes, and services, including B'nai
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**The most up-to-date information on our virtual
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Shabbat Morning Walk with Rabbi Newburge

Saturday, February 6 at 9:00 am

Meet at the Cynwyd Trail

Celebrate the beauty of nature and Shabbat with Rabbi
Newburge and your MLRT community. We will meet at
the Barmouth Trailhead at the Cynwyd Trail (at the end
of Levering Mill Rd). Wear your mask and your walking
shoes for a beautiful winter walk.

*In the case of hazardous inclement weather, this walk
will be canceled.*

*If you have questions, please contact
Rabbi Newburge at gnewburge@mlrt.org.*

THE MENDELSSOHN: GRACE, PASSION & PRIVILEGE

Thursday, February 18 at 7:00 pm

Part two of an in-depth look at the Mendelssohns,
focusing on the life and music of Felix Mendelssohn.
This presentation will be taught through music and
dialogue by professor of music, Karl Middleman, and
feature Andy Heller, Jessica Lennick, Diane Steinbrink,
and Sherrill Neff.

Co-sponsored by St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

February 2021

All programs, classes, and services are virtual unless otherwise noted and can be found at mlrt.org/zoom

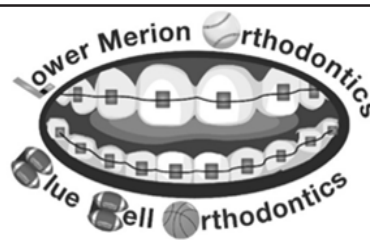
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
	1 8:00 pm Keeping It Reel: <i>Ma Rainey's Black Bottom</i>	2	3	4 11:00 am Bible Study	5 6:30 pm Family Shabbat Service	6 9:00 am Torah Study 9:00 am Shabbat Morning Walk* 10:00 am Shabbat Service 5:00 pm Bat Mitzvah of Victoria Benjamin 6:30 pm Havdallah
7	8 8:00 pm Keeping It Reel: <i>Menashe</i>	9	10	11 NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL 11:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Short Story Discussion: <i>When She is Old and I Am Famous</i> 12:00 pm Du Siach	12 ECE CLOSED 6:30 pm Shabbat Service	13 9:00 am Torah Study 10:00 am Shabbat Service 6:30 pm Havdallah
14 NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	15 PRESIDENTS DAY ECE CLOSED 8:00 pm Keeping It Reel: <i>Suffragette</i>	16 12:15 pm Forward Thinking	17	18 11:00 am Bible Study 7:30 pm Music Class Part 2: Fanny Mendelssohn	19 6:30 pm Jewish Disabilities Awareness & Inclusion Shabbat Service with Jodi Newmark	20 9:00 am Torah Study 10:00 am Shabbat Service 5:00 pm Bar Mitzvah of Owen Soiferman 6:30 pm Havdallah
21 10:00 am Hassel Adult Education Lecture with Sharon Geller	22 8:00 pm Keeping It Reel: <i>Lee Daniel's The Butler</i>	23 12:00 pm Lunch & Learn with RDS	24	25 EREV PURIM 11:00 am Bible Study 7:30 pm Purim Talent Show	26 PURIM 12:00 pm Nosh & Drash with RGN 6:30 pm Shabbat Service with author, Jonathan Kaufman	27 9:00 am Torah Study 10:00 am Shabbat Service 4:00 pm Bat Mitzvah of Janie Silverman 6:30 pm Havdallah
28	March 1 8:00 pm Keeping It Reel: <i>Monk</i>	March 2	March 3	March 4 11:00 am Bible Study	March 5 6:30 pm Shabbat Service	March 6 9:00 am Torah Study 10:00 am Shabbat Service 5:00 pm Bat Mitzvah of Tessa Gunn 6:30 pm Havdallah

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Shabbat with Jodi Newmark

Friday, February 19 at 6:30 pm

**Take in Shabbat with music
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a special talk by Jodi Newmark**

**Ella C. Wolf Lecture with
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**Featuring the Pulitzer Prize-winning
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Friday, February 26 at 6:30 pm

**Learn about the two rival Jewish
dynasties that helped create
modern China!**

Details inside and at mlrt.org